श्रीमती कान्ति सिंह: सभापति महोदय, इसमें जानकारी अभी मेरे पास नहीं है क्योंकि यह अलग से प्रश्न किया गया है। इसकी जानकारी मैं प्राप्त कर लूंगी और आपको भिजवा दूंगी।

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: मंत्री जी, कृपा कर के यह बताएं कि यह जो मेघालय और आसाम के क्षेत्रों से बंगलादेश को कोयला स्मगलिंग हो कर के जा रहा है, क्या यह बात आपकी जानकारी में आ गई है? इसको रोकने के लिए क्या आप कोई नीति बनाएंगे और सदन को आश्वस्त करेंगे कि भविष्य में ऐसा नहीं होने देंगे? यह एक पेचीदा सवाल उठता है। दूसरा सवाल यह है कि काफी अरसे से यह बात चली आ रही है। क्या वजह थी कि यह सूचना आपके पास नहीं पहुंची जबकि इसकी पूरी जानकारी वित्त मंत्रालय को भी, राज्य सरकार को भी हो रही थी, आपके पास क्यों नहीं पहुंची? क्या इस प्रकार की जानकारी प्राप्त करने के लिए आपने कोई यंत्र बनाया है, संगठन बनया है, कोई व्यवस्था की है या नहीं की है?

श्रीमती कान्ति सिंह: जैसे कि अभी मेघालय से कोयले की चोरी के संबंध में आपने कहा। मेघालय से हैंडपिक्ड कोयला भी निर्यात किया जाता है और यह मेघालय स्टेट से रिलेटड है ...(**व्यवधान**)

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: मैं केवल चोरी की बात पूछ रहा हूं। निर्यात की बात, जो आफिशियली एक्सपोर्ट होता है, उसकी चर्चा मैं नहीं कर रहा हूं। जो स्मगलिंग होती है उसको रोकने के लिए चूंकि अब आपकी जानकारी में बात आई है क्या आप कोई स्पष्ट नीति बनाएंगे और सदन को आश्वास्त करेंगे कि भविष्य में स्मगलिंग नहीं होगी। क्या आप यह आवासन देने को तैयार हैं?

श्रीमती कान्ति सिंह: जो इसकी डिटेल्ड बातें हैं, इसकी सारी डिटेल मैं आपके पास भिजवा दूंगी (**व्यवधान**) क्योंकि यहां पर वर्तमान में सभी प्रकार के कोयले के संबंध में जिसमें मेघालय का कोयला भी शामिल है बिना किसी प्रतिबंध के स्वतंत्र रूप से निर्यात किया जाता है। पहले से रिस्ट्रिक्शंस हटा ली गई है। क्योंकि मेघालय में कमर्शियल एक्सप्लायटेशन पोसिबल नहीं है इसलिए हम लोग इस पर रोक नहीं लगा पाए हैं। स्टेट गवर्नमेंट से हम इस पर पहल करेंगे ...(**व्यवधान**)

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Sir, my question has not been answered at all.

श्रीमती कान्ति सिंह: जो चोरी की बातें हैं, हम उसे रोकने के लिए प्रयास करेंगे।

*405. [*The Questioner (Shri Gyan Ranjan) was absent. For answer vide Col. 30 infra*]

Wastage of cement in jute bags

*406. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a high degree of wastage of cement packed in jute bags due to seepage in handling and atmospheric effect;

(b) whether any studies have been conducted as to quantum of such wastage if cement was packed in jute and synthetic bags respectively and the findings of the studies;

(c) whether Government have received representations from the synthetic bag manufacturers as well as the cement industry to withdraw the order that requires fifty per cent packing of cement in jute bags so as to save wastage and cater to consumers preference for synthetic bags; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b): According to a techno-market study conducted by the Technology Information Forecasting & Assessment Council (TIFAC), Department of Science & Technology in January, 1992, seepage loss of cement when packed in jute bags has been estimated at 4% as against 1% when packed in synthetic bags.

(c) and (d): A number of representations have been received from synthetic bag manufacturers and the cement industry for withdrawal of the Jute bags Reservation Order in the case of cement industry. The representatives of these industries have also placed their views before the Standing Advisory Committee constituted under the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987. The Government will take a final decision after considering the recommendations of the said Committee.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHRY: Sir, the statement that is laid on the Table of the House is a typical statement which says everything and nothing. We have been given a clear indication that the Ministry has taken a decision to scale-down the mandatory requirement of 50 per cent to 40 per cent in 1997-98 and to 30 per cent in 1998-99 because it has been categorically found that if you pack cement in jute bags there is a colossal loss in transhipment of these bags and because of the porosity of the bags, cement is lost and the consumer is being short-shipped.

The second major problem is that there is deterioration in the quality of cement when it is stocked and stored for a long time in jute bags. While I totally appreciate that we have to support the jute industry in India, I do not think we should do it at a cost to the consumer and the other sectors. It should not be by compulsion. It violates the very norms of democracy. I want to know if the Government will consider accelerting this process of reduction. In support of this, my Chief Minister, Shri Chandrababu Naidu, had written a DO letter--No. 471/CM in 1996 -- where he had asked that Andhra Pradesh be exempted.

We are forced to package cement in jute bags. Cement manufacturers in our State have rebelled against it. The 'a' part of my supplementary is: would the Government consider accelerating it?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This is your first supplementary.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Sir, the question is: It is a stock reply. I had to give a stock reply because a stock question was put. For example, the Government has not taken a decision. The Supreme Court has reverted the matter to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee will make its recommendations and this will come before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs and we will take a decision. I agree with the hon. Member. There is a tremendous amount of wastage and loss because of packaging cement in jute bags. I do not want to go into details. According to cement manufacturers, because of seepage, if 100 per cent is packed in jute bags, it will cause a loss of Rs. 840 crores annually. If 50 per cent is packed in jute bags, on account of seepage, the loss would be Rs. 420 crores. The next thing is that the jute bag is costlier than the synthetic bag by seven repees. So, the total loss is ten to twelve repees per bag. So, with the extra cost of the bag, the loss comes to Rs. 490 crores. The loss borne by the nation because of packing cement in jute bags in Rs. 910 crores, according to cement producers. According to them, this is is a national wastage. The matter is before the Government. The hon. Member has said that her Chief Minister had asked for an exemption. Exemptions cannot be given to one State alone. Not only the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, but Chieft Ministers of seven other States have written to us. The Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Orissa have written to us against cement being compelled to be packed in jute bags and the matter is under consideration.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: The matter is under consideration and we are all going to sink under it. There has to be a time-bound programme. Strong recommendations have been made by the National Council ....*(Interruptions)* ...

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: When you have cooperative federalism ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: The BJP will learn a lesson or two from here ... *(Interruptions)* ... The National Council for Applied Economic Research has brought out the ambiguity of the jute industry. When seven States have said that they want an exemption and there is scientific data and economic data which proves that it is not viable, for the sake of promoting the jute industry, we cannot hold the country to ransom. I would like the later package to come at an early date so that we can reduce our losses to the minimum.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: For the information of the hon. Member, now cement is not packed in jute bags at all. That is for the information of the hon. Members. I would like to tell the history. In 1987, we created this Act. In 1988, the cement manufacturers approached the Supreme Court and obtained a stay. In 1996, the Supreme Court gave its order reverting it to the Government. Nothing happened during this period. They are packing according to their

wish. Nothing has happened ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: There is a sword hanging over our heads.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: That is right. There is a sword hanging. That means, the Government should take this into consideration as soon as possible.

The judgement has come only recently.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: In the meantime, the jute industry is not examining other aspects of application.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, I would like to put a question. Would this not affect very seriously the position of three crore people in the country who are dependent on jute? You simply cannot take away the livelihood of three crores of people because the cement industry will be making less money. As far as cement industry is concerned, for ten years they have flouted the decision of the Government. They have flouted the court of law. My question is, what action is the Government going to take against the cement industry for flouting the order? I would also like to know whether synethetic bags are not environmentally-unfriendly? As far as I know jute bags are bio-degradable; synthetic bags are not. *(Interruptions)* If synthetic bags are used, they are unfriendly to the environment. *(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Setting up of a Private Sector Refinery

*403. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had received any proposal from PRA Petrochemical Limited for the setting up of private sector refineries, as 100% export oriented unit and if so, the details thereof including the date on which it was received;

(b) how many times the projects had been considered by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board alongwith the reasons for not according approval in this regard;

(c) by when it is proposed to be approved; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) The promoters of M/s. P.R.A. Petorchemicals Ltd. had filed an application for a 10 MMTPA Oil Refinery Project under the 100% EOU Scheme in October, 1994, which was considered by the FIPB and was rejected vide letter dated 3-2-95 on the ground of low value addition. M/s. P.R.A. Petrochemicals Ltd. has subsequently submitted an application dated 29-10-96 with fresh facts for setting up a 9.5 MMTPA Oil Refinery in Andhra Pradesh under the 100% EOU Scheme.

The proposal has been under consideration of FIPB which will make its recommendation as soon as the Inter-Ministerial consultations are completed.

World Bank Assistance for improving Environment and Rehabilitation of displaced persons

*405. SHRI GYAN RANJAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of World Bank assistance for improving environment and rehabilitation of displaced persons in coal mines;

(b) when was this assistance offered by the World Bank;

(c) whether there is any delay on the part of Coal India Limited on finalising the tenders for the above work; and

(d) if so, the time by which these proposals will be finalised by Coal India Limited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) The World Bank has approved Coal Sector Environment and Social Mitigation Project (ESMP) in June, 1996. The project is to be implemented over 5 years and with an estimated project cost of US $ 84 million out of which International Development Association will finance US $ 63 million as a credit. The balance US $ 21 million will be financed by Coal India Ltd. The project has three components:—

(i) Environment

(ii) Resettlement and Rehabilitation